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ABSTRACT

Texas and North Carolina have exhibited strong levels of commitment to define and enforce standards of competent performance in the teaching profession. To make up for a prior lack of definition of what constitutes teacher effectiveness, both states have developed similar systems of teacher appraisal. In North Carolina, the Teacher Performance Appraisal System (TPAS) includes 38 teaching practices grouped in eight functions. Teacher competence is measured at the level of the function, not its practice. The basic tenet of TPAS is that practices may be manifested in different ways and many behaviors may demonstrate a single practice. The Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) is divided into five domains, 13 criteria, and 65 indicators. Both programs require direct observation of teachers for data collection and both provide for the training of appraisers and orientation of teachers. Two figures outlining the evaluation criteria of each program are included. (EJS)

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# A TALE OF TWO APPRAISAL SYSTEMS:

# TEXAS AND NORTH CAROLINA

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# TEXAS AND NORTH CAROLINA
# A TALE OF TWO APPRAISAL SYSTEMS

One of the hallmarks of any profession is the ability of its members to define and enforce standards of competent performance. This task has been difficult or impossible until recently. The problem in many cases was the lack of definition for what constitutes teacher effectiveness. Further, what practices distinguish competent from incompetent teachers and a list of generic practices to measure competence had to be developed.

These questions take on an even greater importance when viewed in relation to overwhelming calls for improvement in the American system of education in the face of rising foreign competition. On a level closer to home with more educators, the move toward merit pay makes measurement of skills and practices become of daily importance. Most important, the profound malaise that overcomes many good teachers and contributes to "teacher burnout" may be attributable, at least in part, to the education profession's inability to articulate and agree on its own technical culture (Lortie, 1975).

## BACKGROUND

Both North Carolina and Texas have moved toward a system which will allow the measurement of those generic practices which facilitate learning by students. The North Carolina system grew from a call by the state's General Assembly in 1979 to "develop uniform performance standards

and criteria to be used in evaluating professional public school employees" and that the criteria would be adopted by July 1, 1981. Following enactment of this legislation, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education instituted a formal study to identify the teaching practices for which teachers reasonably could be held accountable. These were identified by consensus by almost 6000 educators state-wide.

Subsequent legislation amended the original act and allowed for a one year pilot field test during the 1981-82 school year. It was piloted by 24 school districts on a voluntary basis and appraiser training was begun. Implementation was begun statewide in July, 1982.

By this time "effective schools/effective teaching" research began to work its way into the literature. At this time the Department of Public Instruction contracted with a private consulting firm to review the research on effective teaching. The consultants provided a list of teacher behaviors associated with increased student achievement as measured by norm-referenced achievement tests. The improved system would be based on research knowledge, would be generalizable, and would lead to performance improvement. Further the goal of the evaluation would be to improve performance, not eliminate individuals. The improved system was piloted for two years, 1984-85 and 1985-86, by forty districts and was required for use beginning in the 1987-88 school year.

Similarly, Texas began its search for an appraisal instrument with House Bill 72 enacted by the 68th Legislature in special session in the summer of 1984. The State Board of Education was directed to adopt an appraisal process by which performance of teachers for career ladder purposes could be measured. The State Board of Education developed a timeline for the development of the system in January, 1985. A committee comprised of teachers, administrators, regional education service center personnel and representatives colleges and universities was appointed to assist the State Board and the state's education department in the development and implementation of the instrument.

After a review of literature and research, studies of other states where appraisal systems were in use, and surveys of teachers in Texas districts, a list of teaching behaviors to be considered for inclusion was submitted to the State Board's Committee on Personnel. This committee authorized a review of the draft in September, 1985 by experts Dr. John Goodlad, University of Washington, Dr. Richard Manatt, Iowa State University, Dr. Lester Solomon, Georgia State Department of Education and Brigadier General Billy Bowles, a military evaluation expert.

By October, 1985, the instrument was piloted in six school districts. Local appraisers were trained by a Georgia company specializing in performance assessment. Further revisions were made in this study. Training for

appraisers was done in the summer of 1986 and the program was implemented in the fall of 1986 on a statewide basis. Further refinements were made during the 1986-87 school year with the changes implemented in September, 1987.

Though both states based the development of the system in acts by their respective governing bodies, North Carolina and Texas showed a major divergence in development and implementation. The major difference being the timelines by which they were developed. North Carolina used a period spanning two years for the implementation of the first model and a total of nearly eight years for required implementation of the present model. Texas used a time span of only two years for the development and statewide implementation of an instrument which is substantially like the instrument currently in use.

## THE INSTRUMENT

North Carolina's instrument, Teacher Performance Appraisal System (TPAS), includes thirty-eight teaching practices grouped in eight functions. The TPAS measures teacher competence at the level of the function, not the practice. A basic tenet of the system is that practices may be manifested in different ways and many behaviors may demonstrate a single practice. Further, the practices interact within and across functions. This interaction can create difficulties for the observer, but recognition of this interaction preserves and respects the complexity of the art of teaching. Three of the functions (see functions

VI, VII, VIII in Figure 1) are used to evaluate teacher performance and include a mixed bag of reasearch-based practices, school law and practical necessity. The basic text of the TPAS is noted in Figure 1.

The Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) provides many similar opportunities for evaluation. It is divided into five domains, with thirteen criteria and sixty-five indicators supporting them. The criteria and indicators are similar to the functions and practices, respectively, used in the North Carolina TPAS. The domains are divided into two categories, Classroom Teaching and Professional Growth and Responsibilities. Classroom Teaching includes Instructional Strategies, Classroom Management and Organization, Presentation of Subject Matter and Learning Environment. Professional Growth and Responsibilities includes one domain measuring non-teaching, non-classroom activities. Figure 2 shows the outline of the TTAS.

The two instruments are very similar in many respects. Marginal notations on Figures 1 and 2 cross reference the matching aspects of the two. Functions VI, VII, VIII in the TPAS are roughly equivalent to the criteria found in the fifth Domain of the TTAS.

DATA COLLECTION

While some experiences are best recollected in tranquility, teacher evaluation requires direct observation in the classroom. Too many times in the past evaluation has been a ritual in which a teacher is called to the principal's office and faced with a blank evaluation form. The principal proceeds to complete the form with little or no evidence and little direct experience. There is no feedback for the teacher and no suggestion for improvement, often leading to a real cynicism about the teacher's role in the school's mission.

Both the TPAS and TTAS require direct observation in varying amounts depending on the teacher's past performance and experience. TPAS requires a minimum of three observations for most teachers, up to five for inexperienced teachers. TTAS provides for four observations for inexperienced teachers and two for teachers who have begun the climb up the career ladder. TPAS, however, provides for only one observer, the principal. TTAS requires observations by at least two appraisers, the teacher's supervisor and another appraiser designated by the local school board.

Differences appear in how the observation records are made and used. The TPAS appraiser completes a narrative report on a Formative Observation Data Instrument on which a written record is combined with coded scores for each of the practices on the TPAS. Post-observation conferences are

required based on the information placed on the Formative Observation Data Analysis report. At this time feedback is provided to the teacher outlining the areas of special strength or areas that may need improvement.

Near the end of the school year, the appraiser completes the TPAS final report and rates each of the functions on a scale of 1 to 6. (Six - "superior" performance; 5 - "well above standard"; 4 - "above standard"; 3 - "at standard"; 2 - "below standard"; 1 - "unsatisfactory") Comments may be made on the report supporting the rating given. The appraiser shares the report with the teacher and the two collaboratively set goals and strategies that will lead to professional development which become a plan of action for improvement or enhancement of teaching skills.

Data collection on the TTAS is a narrative note-taking process in which the instrument cannot be taken into the observation or completed during the observation. Upon completion of the observation, the appraiser completes an observation record or evaluation record documenting behaviors noted during the observation. The completed record is forwarded to the teacher according to a time line designated by the State Board of Education.

At the conclusion of the individual teacher's observations, an Appraisal Record is completed, combining the reports of the teacher's supervisor and the other appraiser. Ratings are made at this time to reflect the

teacher's abilities on a scale of 1 to 5. ( 5 - "clearly outstanding"; 4 - "exceeding expectations"; 3 - "meets expectations"; 2 - "below expectations"; 1 - "unsatisfactory") A required Summative Conference is held with the teacher to discuss the ratings and, when needed, a Professional Growth Plan is developed to remediate any weaknesses. Other conferences are required only for teachers rating on a performance level of 2 or lower on any domain after a single observation, or as requested by the teacher. Appraisers are encouraged to conference with each teacher after every observation.

TRAINING

Both systems provide for training of appraisers and orientation of teachers prior to the first observation. In addition, TPAS provides extra training to inexperienced teachers and separate training for development and use of Professional Development Plans. TTAS also provides for regular updates of appraiser training as procedures or laws change.

SUMMARY

The two appraisal systems are remarkably similar in design. Both emphasize measurement of the impact of the educational process on students and provide for feedback on the effectiveness of a teacher's behaviors in shaping this process. Major differences involve the number of

observations, the number of appraisers involved, and the way the raw data is handled.

## CONCLUSION

The level of commitment exhibited by both Texas and North Carolina educators to this program of performance appraisal testifies to the importance the states place on teachers. Having established clear expectations for teacher performance, each state has helped propagate those standards by extending the system to every school building in the state. While the investment of time and money has been great, the return on the investment - in terms of better educated children and more professional teachers - will be even greater.

Figure 1 - Teaching Functions and Practices

| | TTAS References |
|---|---|
| **I. Management of Instructional Time** | |
| 1.1 Teacher has materials, supplies and equipment ready at the start of the lesson or instructional activity. | 3e |
| 1.2 Teacher gets the class started quickly. | 4a |
| 1.3 Teacher gets students on task quickly at the beginning of each lesson or instructional activity. | 3a |
| 1.4 Teacher maintains a high level of student time-on-task. | 4e,5b |
| **II. Management of Student Behavior** | |
| 2.1 Teacher has established a set of rules and procedures that govern the handling of routine administrative matters | 5a |
| 2.2 Teacher has established a set of rules and procedures that govern student verbal participation and talk during different types of activities: whole class instruction, small-group instruction, etc. | 3b,5a |
| 2.3 Teacher has established a set of rules and procedures that govern student movement in the classroom during different types of instructional activities. | 3b,5a |
| 2.4 Teacher frequently monitors the behavior of all students during whole-class, small-group, and seat-work activities, and during transitions between instructional activities. | 2b.5b |
| 2.5 Teacher stops inappropriate behavior promptly and consistently, yet maintains the dignity of the student. | 5c,5d,5e 9a,9b |
| **III. Instructional Presentation** | |
| 3.1 Teacher begins lesson or instructional activity with a review of previous material. | 4b,6b,6c |
| 3.2 Teacher introduces the lesson or instructional activity and specifies learning objectives, when appropriate. | 2a,6a |
| 3.3 Teacher speaks fluently and precisely. | 7a,7b,7d |
| 3.4 Teacher presents the lesson or instructional activity using concepts and language understandable to the students. | 7b,8a |

| | |
|---|---|
| 3.5 Teacher provides relevant examples and demonstrations to illustrate concepts and skills. | 6e,6d,7c |
| 3.6 Teacher assigns tasks that students handle with a high rate of success. | 6g |
| 3.7 Teacher asks appropriate levels of questions that students handle with a high rate of success. | 1c,1d,1f 8d |
| 3.8 Teacher conducts lesson or instructional activity at a brisk pace, slowing presentations when necessary for student understanding, but avoiding unnecessary slowdowns. | 4c,4d |
| 3.9 Teacher makes transitions between lessons and between instructional activities within lessons efficiently and smoothly. | 3b |
| 3.10 Teacher makes sure that the assignment is clear. | 3a,3c |
| 3.11 Teacher summarizes the main point(s) of the lesson at the end of the lesson or instructional activity. | 6h |
| IV. Instructional Monitoring of Student Performance | |
| 4.1 Teacher maintains clear, firm, and reasonable work standards and due dates. | |
| 4.2 Teacher circulates during classwork to check all students' performance. | 2b,2c |
| 4.3 Teacher routinely uses oral, written, and other work products to check student progress. | 2c |
| 4.4 Teacher poses questions clearly and one at a time. | 1c,1d,1e |
| V. Instructional Feedback | |
| 5.1 Teacher provides feedback on the correctness or incorrectness of in-class work to encourage student growth. | 2d,2e,2f |
| 5.2 Teacher regularly provides prompt feedback on assigned out-of-class work. | 2e,2f |
| 5.3 Teacher affirms a correct oral response appropriately, and moves on. | 2d,8c |
| 5.4 Teacher provides sustaining feedback after an incorrect response, or no response, by probing, repeating the question, giving a clue, or allowing more time. | 1d,9c |

VI. Facilitating Instruction

| | |
|---|---|
| 6.1 Teacher has an instructional plan which is compatible with the school and systemwide curricular goals. | 13b |
| 6.2 Teacher uses diagnostic information obtained from tests and other assessment procedures to develop and revise objectives and/or tasks. | 13c |
| 6.3 Teacher maintians accurate records to document student performance. | 13c |
| 6.4 Teacher has instructional plan that matches/aligns objectives, learning strategies, assessment, and student needs at the appropriate level of difficulty. | 13b |
| 6.5 Teacher uses available human and material resources to support the instructional program. | |

VII. Communicating Within the Educational Environment

| | |
|---|---|
| 7.1 Teacher treats all students in a fair and equitable manner. | 5d |
| 7.2 Teacher interacts effectively with students, co-workers, parents, and community. | 11a,11b |

VIII. Performing Non-Instructional Duties

| | |
|---|---|
| 8.1 Teacher carries out non-instructional duties as assigned and/or as need is perceived. | 12c |
| 8.2 Teacher adheres to established laws, policies, rules, and regulations. | 12a,12b |
| 8.3 Teacher follows a plan for professional development and demonstrates evidence of growth. | 10a,10b 10c |

Figure 2 - Teaching Domains, Criteria, and Indicators

| | TPAS references |
|---|---|
| **I. Instructional Strategies** | |
| 1. Provides opportunities for students to participate actively and successfully | |
| a. varies activities appropriately | |
| b. interacts with group(s) appropriately | 4.2 |
| c. solicits student participation | 3.7,4.4 |
| d. extends responses/contributions | 3.7,4.4,5.4 |
| e. provides time for response/consideration | 4.4 |
| f. implements at appropriate level | 3.7 |
| 2. Evaluates and provides feedback on student progress during instruction | |
| a. communicates learning expectations | 3.2 |
| b. monitors student performance | 2.4,4.2 |
| c. solicits responses/demonstrations for assessment | 4.2,4.3 |
| d. reinforces correct response/performances | 5.1,5.3 |
| e. provides corrective feedback/clarifies/none needed | 5.1,5.2 |
| f. reteaches/none needed | 5.1,5.2 |
| **II. Classroom Management and Organization** | |
| 3. Organizes materials and students | |
| a. secures student attention | 1.3,3.10 |
| b. uses procedures/routines | 2.2,2.3 |
| c. gives clear administrative directions/ none needed | 3.10 |
| d. maintains appropriate seating/grouping | |
| e. has materials/aids/facilities ready | 1.1 |
| 4. Maximizes amount of time available for instruction | |
| a. begins promptly/avoids waste at end | 1.2 |
| b. implements appropriate sequence of activities | 3.1,3.9 |
| c. maintains appropriate pace | 3.8 |
| d. maintains focus | 3.8 |
| e. keeps students engaged | 1.4 |
| 5. Manages student behavior | |
| a. specifies expectations for behavior/none needed | 2.1,2.2,2.3 |
| b. prevents off-task behavior/none needed | 1.4,2.4 |
| c. redirects/stops inappropriate/disruptive behavior/none needed | 2.5 |
| d. applies rules consistently and fairly/none needed | 2.5,7.1 |
| e. reinforces behavior appropriately | 2.5 |

III. Presentation of Subject Matter

| | |
|---|---|
| 6. Teaches for cognitive, affective, and/or psychomotor learning and transfer | 3.2 |
| a. begins with appropriate introduction | 3.1 |
| b. presents information in appropriate sequence | 3.1 |
| c. relates content to prior/future learning | 3.5 |
| d. defines/describes concepts: skills, attitudes, interests | 3.5 |
| e. elaborates critical attributes | 3.6 |
| f. stresses generalization/principle/rule | 3.11 |
| g. provides for application | |
| h. closes instruction appropriately | |
| 7. Uses effective communication skills | 3.3 |
| a. makes no significant errors | 3.3,3.4 |
| b. explains content/task(s) clearly | 3.5 |
| c. stresses important points/dimensions | 3.3 |
| d. uses correct grammar | |
| e. demonstrates written skills | |

IV. Learning Environment

| | |
|---|---|
| 8. Uses strategies to motivate students for learning | 3.4 |
| a. relates content to interests/experiences | |
| b. emphasizes value/importance of activity/content | 5.3 |
| c. reinforces/praises efforts | 3.7 |
| d. challenges students | |
| 9. Maintains supportive environment | 2.5 |
| a. avoids sarcasm/negative criticism | 2.5 |
| b. establishes climate of courtesy | 5.4 |
| c. encourages slow/reluctant students | |
| d. establishes and maintains positive rapport | |

V. Professional Growth and Responsibilities

| | |
|---|---|
| 10. Plans for and engages in professional development | 8.3 |
| a. progresses in growth requirements/none needed | 8.3 |
| b. stays current in content taught | 8.3 |
| c. stays current in instruction methodology | |
| 11. Interacts and communicates with parents | 7.2 |
| a. initiates communications with parents as appropriate | 7.2 |
| b. conduct conferences with parents in accordance with local policy | |
| c. reports student progress to parents | |
| d. maintains confidentiality | |
| 12. Complies with policies, operating procedures, and requirements | 8.2 |
| a. follows TEA requirements | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| b. | follows district/campus policies/procedures | 8.2 |
| c. | performs assigned duties | 8.1 |
| d. | follows promotion procedures | |
| 13. | Promotes and evaluates student growth | |
| a. | participates in goal-setting | 6.1 |
| b. | plans instruction | 6.4 |
| c. | documents progress | 6.2,6.3 |
| d. | maintains records | |
| e. | reports progress | |

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